

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 IO-03 NSC-05 NSCE-00 L-01 CIAE-00

INR-05 DODE-00 PM-03 SP-02 SAB-01 PRS-01 /043 W

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R 161702Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5569

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 5027

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, SY

SUBJ: JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES SYRIAN REACTION TO SINAI
ACCORD AND ITS CURRENT ATTITUDE TOWARD U.S.

1. SINAI II.

JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR EL-NAMR COMMENTED DEC 16
THAT IN HIS VIEW ONLY REASON SYRIANS WERE PERSISTING IN THEIR
ATTACKS ON EGYPT OVER SINAI II WAS TO FORE-
STALL DEVELOPMENT ARAB WORLD REACTION FAVORABLE TO THE ACCORD.
DAMASCUS WAS SPURRED BY ITS FEAR OF BECOMING TOTALLY
ISOLATED IN ARAB WORLD. NAMR MADE THIS REMARK IN ANSWER
TO MY QUERY IF HE THOUGHT PRESSURES FROM BAGHDAD AND TRIPOLI
MIGHT BE COMPELLING SARG TO PURSUE ITS ANTI-EGYPTIAN
CAMPAIGN. HE CONTINUED THAT THUS FAR SYRIANS HAD BEEN LARGELY
SUCCESSFUL IN BLOCKING DEVELOPMENT ARAB OPINION FAVORABLE
TO SINAI II. HE DESCRIBED SAUDIS AS BEING MORE THAN THEIR
USUALLY CAUTIOUS SELVES, LARGELY BECAUSE THEY KNEW
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DAMASCUS BELIEVED THEY HAD BEEN INTIMATELY INVOLVED

IN DISCUSSIONS WITH U.S. AND EGYPTIANS AND HAD
APPROVED CONTENTS OF ACCORD BEFORE ITS SIGNATURE.

2. NAMR STATED THAT ALTHOUGH PUBLIC ATTACKS ON
EGYPT CONTINUED, HE FELT THERE NONETHELESS HAD
BEEN SOME SHIFT IN SYRIAN EXPECTATIONS. PRIMIN AYYUBI,
WHOSE VIEWS ON POLITICAL SUBJECTS NORMALLY MIRROR THOSE OF
PRESIDENT ASAD, THIS WEEK COMMENTED TO HIM THAT SINAI II WAS
NOW A FACT AND SYRIA COULD ONLY HOPE "TO LIMIT ITS
NEGATIVE ASPECTS." FONMIN KHADDAM, NAMR NOTED,
CONTINUES PRESS FOR HARSHER ATTACKS ON EGYPT.
UP TO LAST MINUTE DURING ASAD'S DEC 9-11
VISIT TO JORDAN, KHADDAM FOUGHT FOR A SEVERE
INDICTMENT OF EGYPT IN JORDANIAN-SYRIAN COMMUNIQUE.
JORDANIAN PRIMIN RIFAI HAD RESISTED, ARGUING THAT
HE KNEW ASAD WAS PREPARED TO SETTLE FOR MUCH
MILDER WORDING. RIFAI PROVED TO BE CORRECT.

3. NAMR CONSIDERS THAT FURTHER TIME WILL BE
NEEDED TO HEAL SYRO-EGYPTIAN BREACH. HE PREDICTS
JORDAN WILL PLAY A ROLE IN "OPENING THE DOOR"
TO RECONCILIATION. ACTUAL RECONCILIATION WILL,
HOWEVER, REQUIRE A SUSTAINED MEDIATION EFFORT
BY SAUDI ARABIA AND HE DOUBTS THE SAUDIS ARE
YET READY TO ENGAGE THEMSELVES FULLY.

4. SYRIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS US.

NAMR ADDED HE HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THE IMPACT ON
THE SYRIAN LEADERSHIP OF THE US SC VOTE EXTENDING
UNDOF WHICH INCLUDED OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT PLO
WOULD BE INVITED TO DEBATE BEGINNING JANUARY 12.
HE PERSONALLY RECOGNIZED OUR FAVORABLE VOTE HAD GIVEN
SYRIANS NO MORE THAN THEY COULD HAVE GOTTEN UNDER
RULE 39, BUT ASSERTED THAT OUR VOTE HAD SIGNIFICANTLY
SERVED TO VALIDATE OUR PRIVATE ASSURANCES THAT
US STEP BY STEP DIPLOMACY WAS NOT INTENDED TO
DIVIDE THE ARAB WORLD.

5. COMMENT. JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR HERE ENJOYS
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INCREASINGLY GOOD ACCESS TO SYRIAN LEADERSHIP GIVEN
CONTINUING SYRIAN-JORDANIAN STEPS TOWARDS CLOSER
POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY COORDINATION.
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PEACE, AGREEMENTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, AMBASSADORS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975DAMASC05027
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750437-0596
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751236/aaaabgan.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <30 OCT 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES SYRIAN REACTION TO SINAI ACCORD AND ITS CURRENT ATTITUDE TOWARD U.S.
TAGS: PFOR, SY, JO, IS, EG, UN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006